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## Time for a Searching Probe of the CIA

Senator Eugene McCarthy has announced his intention to introduce a resolution calling for a "full and complete" investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency by the foreign relations committee. Such an investigation is long overdue and is an appropriate function of this committee.

Since its creation as an intelligence-gathering organization 20 years ago, the CIA has greatly expanded the scope of its operations, without benefit of new legislation or even serious congressional review.

From the passive role of fact-gathering, the agency has moved to become an active participant—sometimes it seems the dominant participant—in the formulation and

execution of policy. It is time someone in the legislative branch examined in depth whether these new functions of the most hush-hush agency in government are compatible with CIA's primary mission of objective intelligence-gathering and with the American system of free government.

Since some activities of the CIA appear to have significantly affected U.S. foreign policy, as in the Dominican Republic and Viet Nam, it is appropriate that the foreign relations committee conduct this investigation. The United States cannot afford to continue to have one arm of the government acting—or even appearing to act—at cross-purposes with other arms of the government and with the stated objectives of the American people in foreign affairs.

There are some who protest that a really penetrating congressional probe of the CIA might compromise important agency activities and embarrass the United States government. Proponents of a thorough investigation must concede there will be some such risk.

But the risk would be minimal

in the foreign relation committee or a select subcommittee thereof. After all, this committee of Congress regularly deals with sensitive matters of national security and has done so with intelligence and discretion.

The alternative to providing adequate congressional oversight to CIA operations is to deny the American people the right to know, at least indirectly through their elected representatives, what is being done with their money and in their name around the world. This is intolerable, especially since many of CIA's most closely guarded secrets are secrets to the American public only. Foreign leaders and even ordinary people in foreign countries like Cambodia, Indonesia and the Dominican Republic are often much more aware of the activities of CIA agents in their lands than are the American people, who as citizens of a democratic republic are ultimately answerable for CIA's acts.

The argument over whether to bring the CIA under tighter congressional supervision comes down to a question of whether to put freedom before security. To curtail the people's freedom to control the activities of their own government in the name of a questionable increment to national security is to put second things first.



Washington Merry-Go-Round  
 —Bastien, San Francisco Chronicle